Hamas in Its Own Words

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On October 7, Hamas attacked Israel, slaughtering around 1,200 men, women, children, and infants in the largest and most brutal massacre of Jews since the Holocaust. Hamas terrorists intentionally recorded their murder, rape, and torture of civilians, including around 200 foreign nationals, and took at least 240 hostages back with them to Gaza.

The physical attack was followed by a propaganda and disinformation campaign. Knowing that Israel would have no choice but to respond to the October 7 massacre, Hamas retreated into its network of tunnels beneath the homes, schools, and hospitals of Gaza, using Palestinian civilians as human shields in order to weaponize the resulting civilian casualties.

This left Israel with two options – either do nothing in response to the murder and kidnapping of its citizens by invading Hamas terrorists, thereby inviting more attacks, or act against Hamas as it hid behind and under its own citizens. As Hamas leaders themselves admit, Hamas sees either path as a strategic win for its campaign of terror and incitement against Israel, with the ultimate goal of Israel's eradication. While there can be legitimate criticism of specific Israeli policies and actions during its war with Hamas, it is paramount to remember this worldview of Hamas.

Since its founding in the late 1980s, Hamas has been promoting rhetoric and policies aimed at destroying the Jewish state of Israel and killing Jews and Israelis around the world. This is evident in their founding charter, which cites the infamous Protocols of the Elders of Zion forgery as "proof" of a Zionist plot to control the world. It remains true after Hamas released a new charter in 2017, which essentially simply swapped the word "Jew" out and replaced it with "Zionist" while repeating antisemitic tropes.

The following are examples of hateful rhetoric by Hamas leaders and officials, as well as language from their charter:

Hamas Leaders and Officials:

Statements by Hamas officials make clear the terrorist organization's commitment to destroying Israel and killing Jews and Israelis around the world.

- Ismail Haniyeh in 2020: He explained that Hamas rejects ceasefire agreements by which, "Gaza would become Singapore," preferring to remain at war with Israel until a Palestinian state is established from the River to the Sea: "We cannot, in exchange for money or projects, give up Palestine and our weapons. We will not give up the resistance... **We will not recognize Israel, Palestine must stretch from the [Jordan] River to the [Mediterranean] Sea."**
- Hamas official, Hamad Al-Regeb in an April 2023 sermon: He **prayed for "annihilation" and "paralysis" of the Jews** whom he described as filthy animals: "[Allah] transformed them into filthy, ugly animals like apes and pigs because of the injustice and evil they had brought about." Al-Regeb also prayed for the ability to "get to the necks of the Jews."
- Hamas Political Bureau Chairman Saleh Al-Arouri in an August 2023 interview: He expressed Hamas' desire for **"total war" with Israel**: "Therefore, we are convinced that if a total conflict begins, the airspace and seaports of this entity will be shut down, and they will not be able to live without electricity, water, and communications."
- Ahmad Abd Al-Hadi (Hamas representative in Lebanon) in an October 12, 2023 TV show laid out Hamas' expectation that it would be Israel that would sue for peace and indicated that a ceasefire is part of Hamas' overall strategy, but said that he was not at liberty to say what exactly Hamas has planned for the next step after a ceasefire. He also stated that October 7 had achieved its intended purpose of landing "a blow to the normalization (of relations between Israel and Arab countries)."
- Hamas member, Ghazi Hamad on October 24, 2023: "Israel is a country that has no place on our land […] because it constitutes a security, military, and political catastrophe to the Arab and Islamic nation." (October 24, 2023, LBC TV (Lebanon)). He also vowed to **repeat the October 7 attacks "time and again until Israel is annihilated,"** and expressing a desire to "sacrifice martyrs" (referring to Gazan civilians) for Hamas' ideological aim of destroying Israel.
- In a speech before the International Union of Muslim Scholars in Doha on January 9, 2024, Ismaeel Haniyeh, chairman of Hamas's political bureau, called the October 7 massacre the "advanced [battle] front of the Ummah." Calling for "financial jihad" (donations to Hamas) and "jihad of the teeth" (physical jihad), he asked the international audience, "Who wishes to invest in building the jihadist generation to

> liberate Jerusalem and to unite the blood of the Ummah with the blood of the people of Gaza, Jerusalem, and Palestine on the land of Palestine for its liberation and the liberation of Jerusalem?"

Statements by Hamas officials also make clear the terrorist organization's disregard for the loss of civilian life not only in Israel but also in Gaza.

- Hamas senior leader Khaled Mashal stated on October 19, 2023 that he views the current loss of civilian life in Gaza – brought about by Hamas' strategy of using human shields – as essential: **"No nation is liberated without sacrifices... In all wars, there are some civilian victims. We are not responsible for them."**
- Hamas senior leader Ismail Haniyeh, commenting on the loss of civilian life in Gaza on October 26, 2023: **"The blood of the women, children and elderly […] we are the ones who need this blood, so it awakens within us the revolutionary spirit."**

The Hamas Charter:

Hamas' extremism is rooted in ideologies that predate the establishment of Israel in 1948. The preamble to Hamas' founding charter contains the following quote from the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, Hassan al-Banna:

> *"Israel will exist and will continue to exist until Islam will obliterate it, just as it obliterated others before it" (Preamble to Hamas Charter).*

The Hamas Charter specifically dates Hamas' ideological roots to well before the establishment of Israel and sees itself as part of a "chain of the struggle" against not only the state of Israel but also Jews (who they term "Zionists") who lived there before it became Israel in 1948.

> *The Islamic Resistance Movement is one of the links in the chain of the struggle against the Zionist invaders. It goes back to 1939, to the emergence of the martyr Izz ad-Din al-Qassam and his brethren the fighters [and] members of Muslim Brotherhood. It goes on to reach out and become one with another chain that includes the struggle of the Palestinians and Muslim Brotherhood in the 1948 war and the Jihad operations of the Muslim Brotherhood in 1968 and after. (Hamas Charter, Article 7).*

Izz ad-Din al-Qassam was a Syrian cleric who formed the Black Hand, an early Islamist group that terrorized and murdered Jews in Mandate Palestine in the 1930s.

The Hamas brigades that committed the atrocities of October 7, as well as the rockets Hamas fires at civilian population centers in Israel, are both named after him.

Hamas sees the territory of Israel as exclusive to all the world's Muslims (not just Palestinians), forbids a Jewish state on "any part" of the land and promotes the idea that it is the "duty for every Muslim" to reverse Israel's existence:

> *The land of Palestine is an Islamic Waqf [holy possession] consecrated for future Muslim generations until Judgment Day. No one can renounce it or any part or abandon it or any part of it.* (Hamas Charter, Article 11).
>
> *Palestine is an Islamic land... Since this is the case, the liberation of Palestine is an individual duty for every Muslim wherever he may be.* (Hamas Charter, Article 13).

In its founding charter, Hamas cites a particularly violent hadith as proof that Muslims need to fight and kill Jews:

> *The hour of judgment shall not come until the Muslims fight the Jews and kill them, so that the Jews hide behind trees and stones, and each tree and stone will say: 'Oh Muslim, oh servant of Allah, there is a Jew behind me, come and kill him,' except for the Gharqad tree, for it is the tree of the Jews.* (Hamas Charter, Article 7).

Peace is not an option for Hamas, only violence:

> *There is no solution for the Palestinian question except through Jihad.* (Hamas Charter, Article 13).

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